The Dewan opened the Assembly with the following

ADDRESS.

"GENTLEMEN OF THE SRI MULAM POPULAR ASSEMBLY,

Another year has gone by, and I have been once again commanded by His Highness the Maha Raja to invite you to the capital to hear first hand from you the needs of those whom you represent, and to explain to you the policies and the activities of the Government. To you, this session is important as marking the closing year of the second decade of your eventful life; and to us all, the year we have assembled to review is eventful in that it chronicles the conferment, by His Majesty the King Emperor, on His Highness the Maha Raja, our beloved Ruler, of an Honorary Colonelcy in the Indian Army; and it is also the year in which, for the first time, Her Highness the Senior Rani has been blessed with a child. It is further the year in which political relations with this State have been assumed by the Government of India direct and the political officer at the Court of His Highness the Maha Raja has been raised to the status of an Agent to the Governor-General.

2. Meeting as we do for the first time after the assumption by the Government of India of direct political relationship with our State, it may not be amiss to note the very important position that she occupies among Indian States. Although, in point of area, Travancore is smaller than seventeen other such States, she is the third largest in point of population and the fourth largest in point of revenue. In the matter of education and political advancement, she holds the foremost place among Indian States, the percentage of the literacy of her population being the highest in all India except Burma, and her Legislative Council being the embodiment of the largest measure of constitutional reform inaugurated in any Indian State down to the present day. She is still largely an agricultural country; but her industrial awakening, as revealed by the last census, is greater than that of the adjoining British Indian Districts; and in her water, mineral and forest resources she possesses, in an abundant measure, all the natural agents so eminently conducive to her industrial advancement.

3. Copies of the Administration Report for the year 1098 M. E. have been placed in your hands, from which you will know in detail how the administration of the several departments of the State was conducted during the year.

ECONOMIC POSITION.

4. Land. Land is the mainstay of the people of Travancore, as it is of the rest of India, as many as 53·9 per cent of them, according to the last census, being supported by agriculture. The prosperity of the land-holder is therefore of paramount consideration to the State, and you will note that the several reforms effected in the administration of the Land Revenue Department in recent years have had the three-fold object of (1) increasing the facilities for the assignment of lands for cultivation, consistently with the prevention of speculation therein; (2) conserving, in the communal interest, all *poramboke* and other Government lands which ought not, under any circumstances, to be thrown open for registry; and (3) affording help to the cultivator in increasing production and improving his lot.

5. Extension of Cultivation. The Land Assignment Regulation, III of 1097, was, as you know, enacted for preventing speculation; and the Revised Puduval Rules, which have been issued under Section 7 of that Regulation, have, as their main object, the provision of equal opportunities to all for acquiring lands. The salient features of these rules are that, while all unoccupied lands available for registry would be cut up into conveniently small blocks and sold by auction, lands already occupied *bona fide* and containing valuable improvements would be assigned to the occupants themselves without auction. In the case of the depressed classes composed of Pulayas, Parayas, Kuravas, Vedas and hillmen, and comprising about 8·7 per cent. of the aggregate population of the State, as also in the case of the landless poor of all communities, the rules provide for the assignment of lands on concessional terms without auction, subject to a maximum limit of three acres per family,

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